MARVEL
CONAN THE KING
$1.00
U.K. 50p
CAN. $1.25
27
MAR

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

THE WESTERN OCEAN OFF THE SHORE OF BLACK-WALLED KHEMI, GREATEST CITY OF ANCIENT,

"WHO KNOWS, HUSBAND?" THE FISHERMAN'S WIFE HAD SAID. "THIS THING YOU'VE FOUND MAY BE A LUCKY CHARM..."

"...WHAT HARM WE KEEP IT FOR OURSELVES AND SEE IF IT BRINGS US GOOD FORTUNE?"

IT HAS NOT.

SILVESTRI
ISHERWOOD

A DEATH IN STYGIA

CONAN THE KING™ Vol. 1, No. 27, March, 1985. (U.S.P.S. 589-610) Published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, James E. Galton, President. Stan Lee, Publisher. Michael Hobson, Vice-President, Publishing. Milton Schiffman, Vice-President, Production. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. **SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.** Published bi-monthly. Copyright ©1984 by Conan Properties, Inc. CONAN THE KING (including all prominent characters featured in this issue) and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Conan Properties, Inc. The advertising and editorial material appearing on pages 5, 7, 10, 12, 37, 39, 42, 44, 47, 48, covers 2, 3, and 4 only, copyright ©1984 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. Price $1.00 per copy in the U.S. and $1.25 in Canada. Subscription rate $12.00 for 12 issues. Canada and Foreign, $14.00. Printed in the U.S.A. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the conditions that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. **POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO CONAN THE KING, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, 10TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016.**

ON SHORE...

"THE ULTIMATE POWER OF DARKNESS ONCE WAS MINE."

"IT WILL BE MINE AGAIN, AND WITH IT, I'LL DESTROY THE DOG-KING, CONAN.

"BUT FIRST, I MUST RECLAIM MY--NO!"

BY SET! NO!

"SOMEONE HAS COME BEFORE ME."

"IT CANNOT BE."

TURN, BOY.

BLIND YOUR EYES TO THE SUNLIGHT...

"...AND GAZE UPON DARK SULFS..."

...GAZE UPON THE NIGHT WITHIN THESE ORBS.

ANSWER ME. YOUR MOTHER LIES DEAD.

WHERE IS YOUR FATHER?

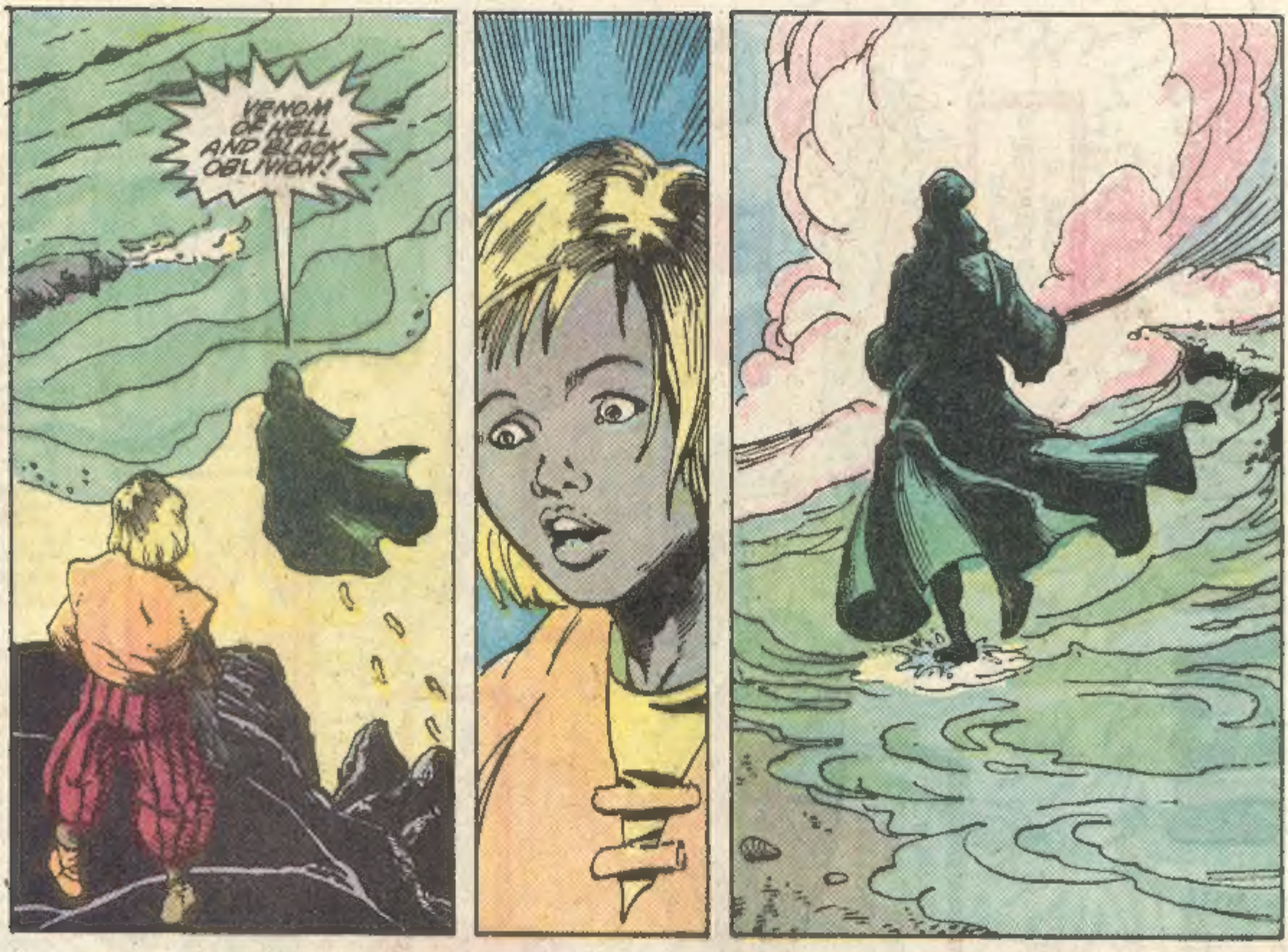
OUT UPON THE WAVES.

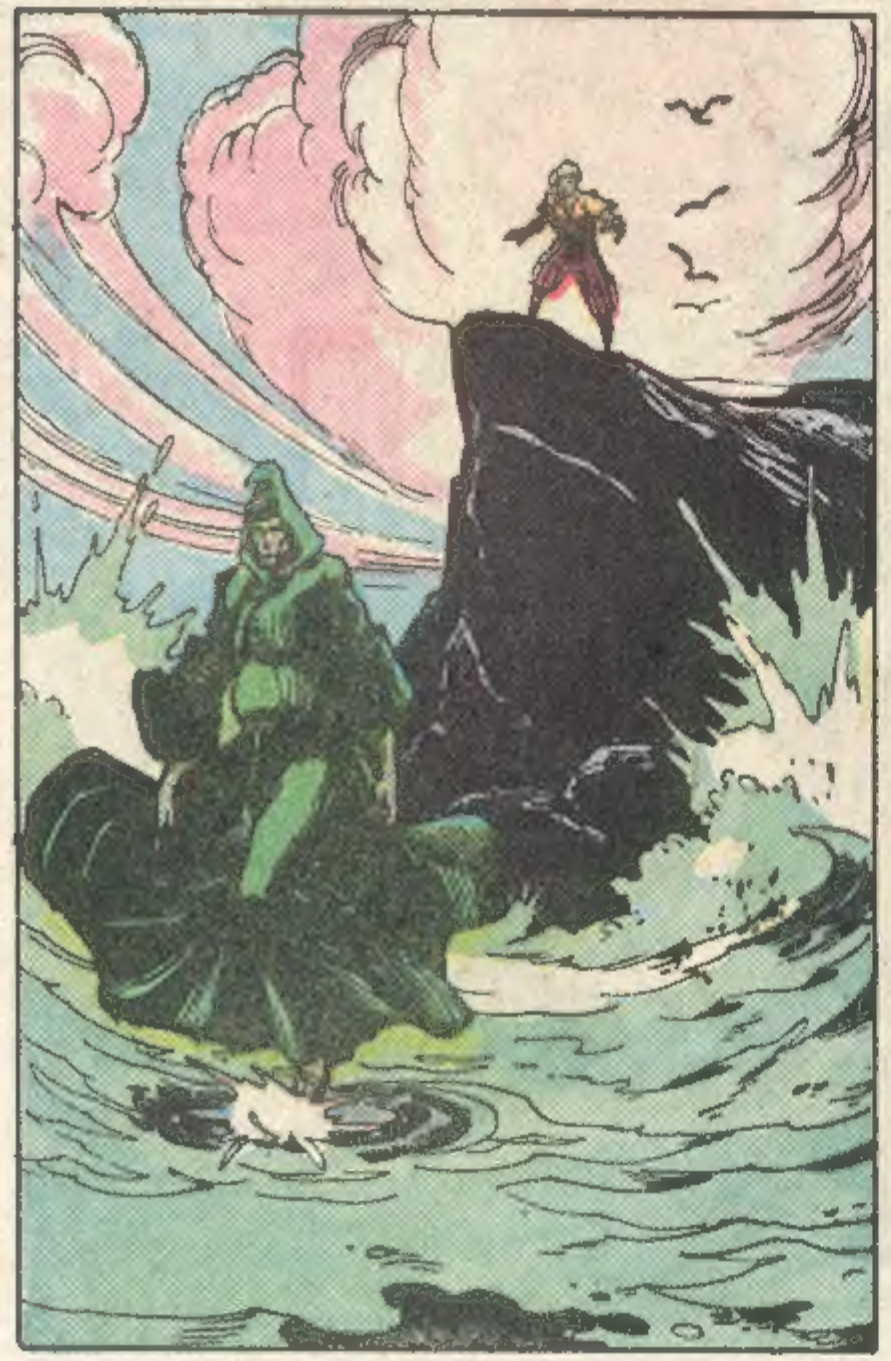
CONCENTRATE...

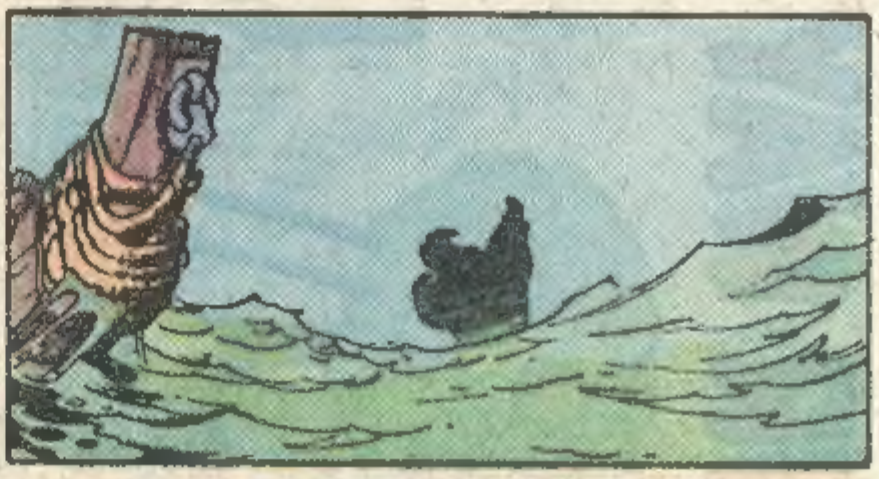
CONCENTRATE...

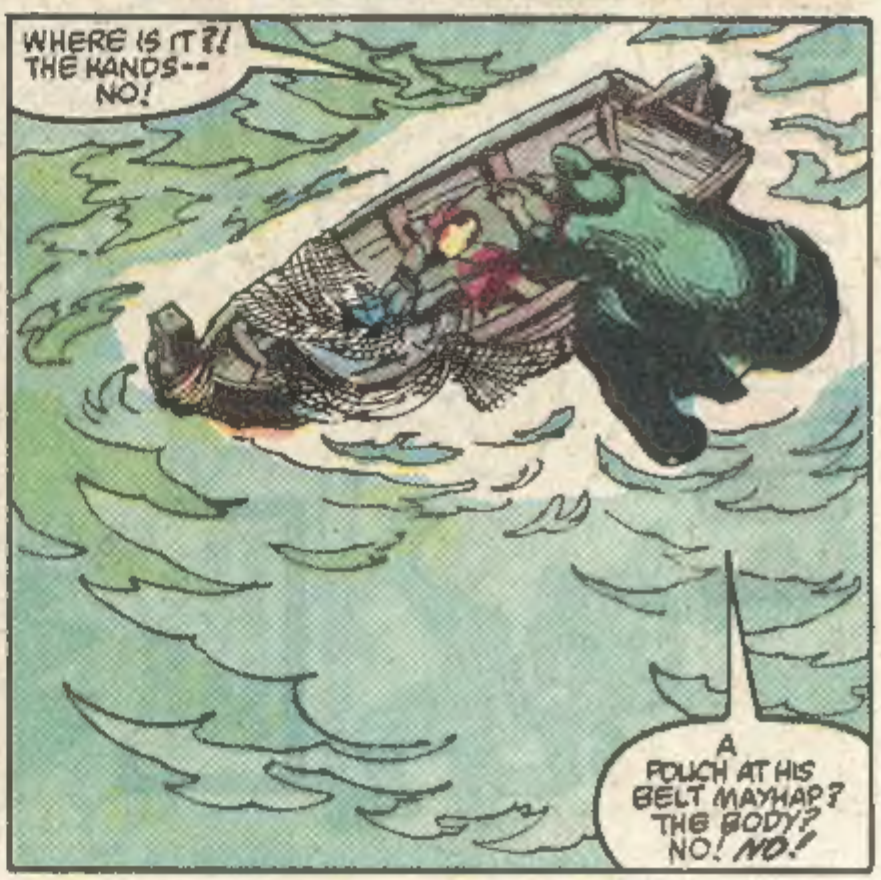
I *MUST* FIND HIM BEFORE ANYONE ELSE REACHES--

"NO! HE, TOO IS SLAIN!"


VENOM OF HELL AND BLACK OBLIVION!

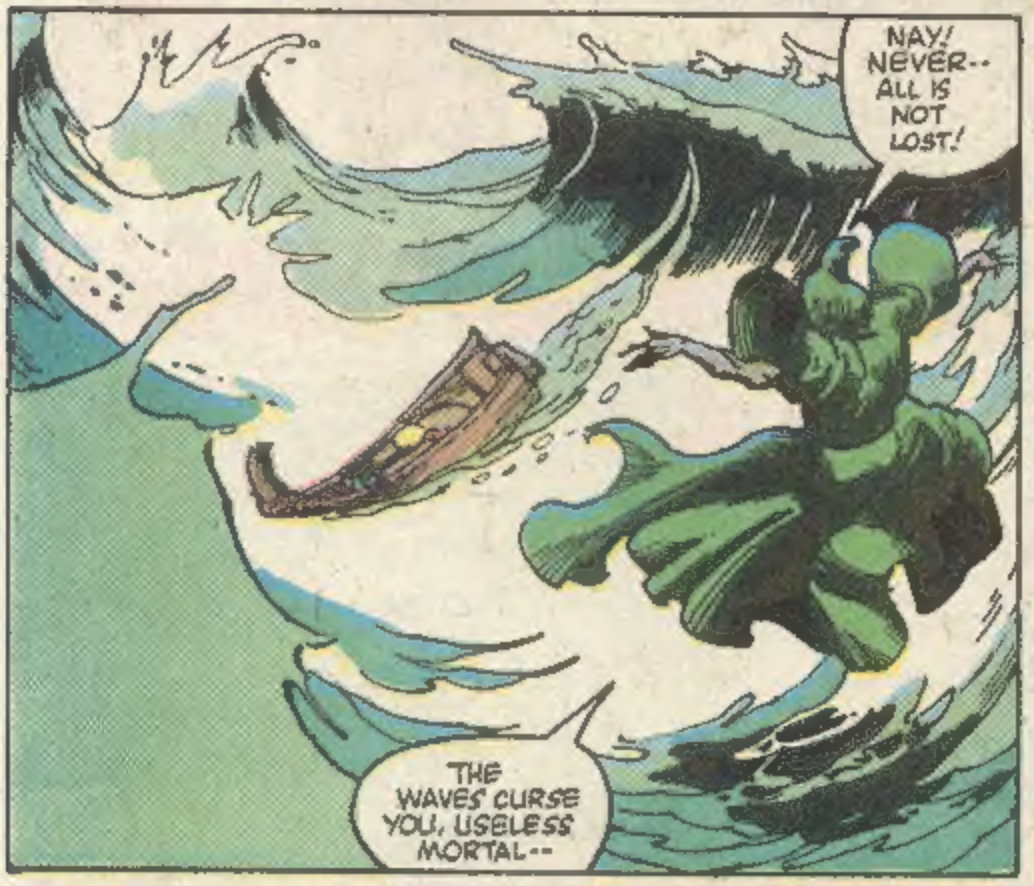





WHERE IS IT?! THE HANDS-- NO!
A POUCH AT HIS BELT MAYHAP? THE BODY? NO! NO!

IT IS GONE!

BY THE FANGED GOD-- I AM OUT-DONE!


NAY! NEVER-- ALL IS NOT LOST!
THE WAVES CURSE YOU, USELESS MORTAL--

--AND SHATTER YOUR CRAFT!

I SHALL HAVE ANSWER FROM THE OCEAN DEEPS!

WHY DO YOU DREDGE ME UP FROM MY BED OF MIRE AND MUD, NECROMANCER?

IN THE NAME OF SET, YOU MUST GUIDE ME, O LONG DEAD ONE...

...YOU WHO HAVE DWELLED IN THE NETHER REALM BENEATH THE SHADOW OF THE SCALY LORD.

THAT WHICH YOU SEEK HAS BEEN CLAIMED BY ONE OF YOUR OWN KIND.

NOW BEGONE, MAGE, FOR I WOULD SLEEP.. SLEEP...

...SLEEEEEEP...

ONE OF MY OWN KIND... WIZARDS...

FANGS OF THE SERPENT! THEN I NEED JOURNEY UP DEATH'S RIVER, STYX...

"...TO NEBTHU..."

HERE'S WHERE WE BARGAINED TO, STRANGER-- AYE, HERE AN' NOT ONE PADDLE MORE...

...FOR YONDER LIE THE RUINS OF NEBTHU--PTUI!/ THE GODS PROTECT US--HAUNTED BY THE SORCEROUS PRIESTS O' SET. AYE'S WHAT THEY SAYS.

LEAVE ME THERE.

THERE? NAY.

THAT RIVER-DOG'LL HAVE A BELLYFUL O' YE. I'LL--

TO THE BANK I SAY, WITLESS DOG!

?!

AYE, T-T-TO THE B-B-BANK IF'N YE SAY SO, S-S-STRANGER...

...THE B-B-BANK...

PTUI PTUII--THE GODS PROTECT ME--PTUII!

' ALL STYGIA IS ACCURSED BUT THRICE ACCURSED IS NEBTHU '--

--THE DREAD OF THE UNNATURAL IS WRIT LARGE IN MEN'S SAYINGS.

BUT I AM NO *MERE MAN*

THE BLACK HYENA SPHINX--I SENSE THAT WITHIN ITS FORBIDDEN WALLS...

" THE ARROGANT BLUNDERING DOGS DARE MEET THIS VERY HOUR... "

A STRANGER VIOLATES THESE SECRET WALLS.

BUT HOW?

BY WHAT POWERS COULD ANY PENETRATE THE HIDDEN PORTAL, THRONEMASTER?

BAH MUMMERY.

THE TRESSPASSER SHALL DIE BY OUR DARK FORCE, BROTHERS

...THE SELFSAME FORCE...

...THAT SHIELDS US FROM HARM.

ONE STEP MORE, STRANGER, AND YOU WILL DIE THOUSAND DEATHS MORE HORRIBLE THAN HELLFIRE AND HOT SULFUR!

IGNOBLE PRETENDERS!

BY THE ELDER GODS, HOW--?!

TO WITHSTAND THE DARK FORCE--?

'TIS IMPOSS.BLE

WHO ARE YOU, STRANGER? ANSWER ME!

IS IT THE WIZARDS OF THE WHITE HAND SEND YOU? OR THE WITCHMEN OF HYPERBOREA? I DEMAND YOU--

BRAZEN THIEF!

YIELD TO ME THAT WHICH IS MINE AND MAYHAP I SHALL SUFFER YOU TO DIE PAINLESSLY.

YOU, YOU SPEAK RIDDLES, AND WE HAVE STOLEN NAUGHT

LIAR! *NOW* RETURN TO ME WHAT YOU HAVE ROBBED FROM THE CORPSE OF THE FISHERMAN!

YOUR POWER BE GREAT, UNHOLY STRANGER--

--BUT OURS SHALL EQUAL--

UNGH!

BY THE GHOUL HYENA OF CHAOS!

RISE UP AGAINST HIM, BROTHERS!

PALTRY GENERATION OF FALSE WIZARDS! YOU ARE GNATS TO ME!

HIS MAGIC VANQUISHES OUR OWN. NO!

STOP! BY THE WINGED DARKNESS, STOP!

NOW GIVE IT TO ME--

I SWEAR, STRANGER, WE OWN NAUGHT THAT IS YOURS- BUT HERE--

--PERUSE THE MYSTIC SCROLL OF RAMASET. MAYHAP YOU'LL FIND SOME CLUE THERE N--

AIEE!

BLATHER NG IMBEC LE! RAMASET WAS MY DISCIPLE!

WHAT NEED HAS THE MASTER OF A STUDENT'S SCRIBBLINGS?!

WOULD. . I .. THEN WOULD YOU S T THE THRONE AND BE OUR--?

ENOUGH! I SEE NOW THAT SLAVES SO WEAK IN WIZARDCRAFT AS THESE COULD NEVER POSSESS THAT WHICH I SEEK.

BLACK HELL CONFOUND YOU ALL--

NO!

ARGH!

--WITH TEN THOUSAND TORMENTS OF THE LIVING DAMNED!

NO!

THE PAIN!

SET GRANT ME DEATH!

THE DEMONS OF THE FROZEN NETHERVOIDS BLAST YOU!

CRIIK

CRIIK

SHRIIK

YE GODS WHOM WE HAVE GIVEN DRINK OF INFANTS' BLOOD, PRESERVE US!

CHRIIK

SHRIIIK

BROTHERS, THIS WAY-- FLEE!

NO! THE SUDDEN STENCH OF WORMY CARRION--!

A FOUL DEVIL'S WIND!

ENOUGH!

BEGONE DENIZENS OF THE ABYSS!

BEGONE!

...AND LEAVE BEHIND THESE WORTHLESS HUSKS OF HUMANKIND...

...BEREFT OF ALL BREATH OF LIFE

I AM WEARY AND HAVE WASTED TOO MUCH ENERGY ON THESE FOOLS.

A PROFITLESS EXPENDITURE OF MAGICS PROMPTED BY MY RAGE

FOR THIS MORN I WAS AS CLOSE TO POWER SUPREME AS IS HELL TO THE DEVIL, AND YET I LOST IT.

WHAT CANNY WIZARD IS IT THEN, IF NOT ONE OF THESE, HAS OUT-WITTED ME?

BAH! I MUST FIRST REST.. THIS SPELL-CASTING S EXHAUSTED ME.

REST, AYE, AND PRACTICE PATIENCE

I'VE SCANT SORCEROUS ENERGIES ENOUGH TO SUMMON THE *MISTS OF TIME*.

I'LL GAZE THERE IN AT PAST AND PRESENT AND FIND PERHAPS SOME HINT OR CLUE...

ANUTEP, LOOK! MY NET'S MORE FULL THAN A KING'S PYRAMID!

AYE! THE GODS DO SMILE ON THIS DAWN'S HAUL!

LET'S GUT THE BIGGEST AND-- WHAT?!

WHAT'S TH S IN ITS BELLY?

WHATON, IT GLOWS LIKE SOMETHING MAGICAL!

LOST OVERBOARD SOME NOBLE S BARK, NO DOUBT, AND SWALLOWED BY MY CATCH.

WHO KNOWS, HUSBAND? THIS THING YOU VE FOUND MAY BE A LUCKY CHARM.

WHAT HARM WE KEEP IT FOR OURSELVES AND SEE IF IT BRINGS US GOOD FORTUNE?

AYE, MAGICAL INDEED, AND AS THEY RUBBED ITS GLITTERING SURFACE...

" ITS POWER REACHED BEYOND OBLIVION..

"...TO THE SHADOWY ABYSS OF SOULS...

" . AND SUMMONED MY SPIRIT FAMILIAR

" TO BE REBORN

THIS MORTAL SHELL IS NOT THE SAME I WORE BEFORE

...BUT E MATTER ONCE I HAVE REGAINED MY WIZARD'S MASTERY I'LL SEEK MY ERSTWHILE FORM

BUT FIRST I NEED SOMEPLACE TO DWELL AND DABBLE IN THE DARKEST ARTS

YON CASTLE WILL DO AS WELL AS ANY OTHER.

" AYE *MALORIC'S* CASTLE IN *AQUILONIA*

THE DULLARD BARON THOUGHT TO DUPE *ME*..

...YET ALL THE WHILE 'TWAS I PLAYED *HIM* FOR THE FOOL

...THEN TO AGREED I'LL GRANT YOU LODGINGS HERE AND DAILY BOARD OF COURSE, AND OUTFIT YOU WITH CHARMS, ALEMBICS, GRIMOIRES, AMULETS, WHATEVER IT IS YOU MAGES REQUIRE--

--BUT IN RETURN YOU'LL PRACTICE YOUR ARTS EXCLUSIVELY FOR ME AND AT MY BIDDING.

AGREED, SIR, IF THIS CHAMBER BE GIVEN ME AS MY OWN

OUR BED CHAMBER?! MALORIC, YOU'LL NOT--

THE CHAMBER IS YOURS, GOOD FELLOW

YOU FOOL. DO YOU THINK *EVERY* BARON HAS A WIZARD IN HIS CONTROL?

I WARN YOU, WIFE, DO *NOTHING* TO ANNOY THE MAGE WHILE I'M OFF AT THE COUNCIL OF BARONS IN *TARANTIA*!

THE WINDOWS LOOK OUT AT THE SOUTH TOWARDS THE DARK HOMELAND OF SET.

SNAP

HERE N I'LL PRACTICE SORCERY ANEW

"AND PRACTICE, I DID UTTERING AWFUL SPELLS NO HUMAN VOICE HAD MOUTHED SINCE TIME SPILLED OUT OF BLACKNESS.

"...WHILE MALORIC TARRIED IN THE DOG'S COURT..."

...AND THOUGH WE BE AT PEACE ON ALL BORDERS—

...STILL KING CONAN WILL SOON SEND PRINCE CONN AMONG THE SUNDERMEN TO RECRUIT FOR THE IMPERIAL ARMY.

NOW I YIELD TO COUNCILOR TILITICUS, WHO WILL GIVE US THE GRANARY REPORT.

COUNCILOR TILITICUS...?

GRAIN REPORT? WHAT ABOUT BUILDING A ROAD TO CANTRIUM?

YAWN! HUSH, YOU OLD FOOL! I WANT TO BE OUT OF HERE BEFORE TWILIGHT!

"... A SURPLUS OF SIX THOUSAND ROUND BUSHELS INCLUSIVE, AS WELL AS FOUR HUNDRED."

MMMM

HNF! PROSPERO?

I'LL NOT SUFFER THIS MISERY WITHOUT COMPANY.

FOR BARLEY, THE LEDGER--PHFF--WILL GIVE US COMPARISONS...

PFOOF

...WITH THE PAST SIXTEEN HARVESTS...

, FOUR THOUSAND, TWO HUNDRED, NINETY-SIX THEN, IN THE YEAR OF THE KING'S TREATY, EIGHT THOUSAND, SIXTY-SEVEN, NOT INCLUDING.

BAH! IF THE KINGDOM CONTINUES TO LANGUISH IN PROSPERITY, LITTLE WILL CHANGE...

AND I'LL NEVER GAIN PROMOTION TO THE COURT

TRUE, MALORIO.

PRAY TELL, PUBLIUS, WHY IS KING CONAN NOT HERE TO SIT THROUGH OUR ALL-IMPORTANT GRANARY FIGURES?

HA! HEAR, HEAR, AEMILIUS!

CONAN THE BARBARIAN CUR OF CIMMERIA BECOME A KING

"BEHOLD THE HATEFUL DOG IN THE MISTS OF TIME WITH HIS BLOOD-PUP, CONN...

"...THE VERY WHELP I AFFENWHEN SLEW AS THE SPITEFUL PRELUDE TO CONAN'S OWN FUTURE DOOM."

THE HOUNDS HAVE A SCENT!

FATHER, THERE-- LOOK!

A BEAR!

I'LL MAKE THE KILL!

HO, THERE, GRIZZLY!

--I'LL SHOW YOU HOW THE GRANDSON OF CUMMER ANS STRIKES A--

--DEATHBLOW--

GRRRAARR

THUK!

UMPH!

CONN!

FATHER!

STAY BACK, BOY!

CRACK

CROM'S BLOOD!

YOU WON'T KILL A BEAST WITH RECKLESSNESS, YOU IMPETUOUS WHELP!

HA! STILL YOU'RE A BRAVE LAD WITH AN IRON GUT LIKE YOUR NORTHERN KIN, AND *THERE'S* WHAT MAKES A BOLD WARRIOR

NOW COME, WE'LL GALLOP THESE WOODS 'TIL OUR LUNGS BURST WITH MORNING AIR...

...WHILE OUR STODGY COUNCILORS TALK ENDLESS CIRCLES IN THEIR STUFFY CHAMBERS!

I TELL YOU, CONN, 'TIS GOOD TO BE THE KING.

"CURSE YOU CONAN.

"...CURSE YOU AND YOUR KINGDOM--

WHEN WILL FATHER BE BACK, MOTHER?

SOON I TRUST I'VE NOT SEEN HIM YET THIS DAY EITHER.

MITRA KNOWS, A KING'S OUT BE SEEM NEVER TO END, *RADE-GUND.*

MY LORD, THIS IS HIGHLY IMPROPER--!

HA, PUBLIUS! PROPRIETIES BE DAMNED--

--I'LL SHOW MY WIFE THIS MORNING'S CATCH BEFORE THEY SKIN AND BOIL IT IN THE KITCHEN SHED--!

A THOUSAND MORTAL PARDONS, *QUEEN ZENOBIA*, PRINCESS--

I TRIED TO, UM... DISSUADE HIS MAJESTY, BUT, AS YOU SEE..

OH!

A BEAR!

CONAN!

FATHER!

I THOUGHT THE COUNCIL OF BARONS MET TODAY.!?

AND I FELT LIKE HUNTING.

I LEFT TROCERO AND PROSPERO IN CHARGE.

HA HA-- YOU RE A LIV NG PROVERB, MY HUSBAND--

--AYE, 'TAKE THE MAN OUT OF CIMMERIA, YOU'LL NOT TAKE CIMMER A OUT OF THE MAN.

OH, CONAN.

RADEGUND'S BEEN WAITING TO SEE YOU ALL MORN NG.

COME HERE, GIRL.

CHRRK

THERE'S A HANDSOME NECKLACE.

OH, THANK YOU, FATHER!

I'LL WEAR IT FOREVER!

AND HERE'S A SULLIED SIGHT!

WELL, YOUNG MAN, IF YOU'D GO OFF TO GUNDERLAND AS AQUILONIA'S DIPLOMAT--

--I SUGGEST YOU BATHE AND OUTFIT YOURSELF LIKE A PRINCE AND NOT A WOODSMAN.

HA HA HA

SO, A FAMILY GATHERING. HOW COZY

BAH! THEY'VE CONN AND RADEGUND TO MAKE THEM HAPPY, WHAT NEED HAVE THEY OF *TAURUS?*

CONFOUND YOU, FATHER AND MOTHER!

CONFOUND YOU, CONAN! CONFOUND YOU, DOG!

I'LL NOT STOMACH YOUR FULL-BELLIED LAUGHTER!

NAY.

COME, I COMMAND THEE, MISTS OF TIME--

-- REVEAL ME THE KING'S CASTLE AT *THIS VERY HOUR.*

FOR THESE SEVERAL MONTHS SINCE THE PRINCE IS DEAD NO DOUBT THE MONARCH'S GROWN MORE MELANCHOLY...

PARDON AN' PARDON, BARON MALORIC, BUT IT'S THEM WORKING PLANS YE'VE DRAWN UP FOR THE FALCON'S MEWS--

WHY, THEY DON'T PROMISE TO BE'S STURDY AS YE DO BE THINKIN.'

BLAST YOUR TONGUE-WAGGING, PEASANT!

NOW THAT I'VE BEEN CHOSEN CONAN'S COUNCILOR, I'M IN CHARGE HERE-- DARE NOT FORGET IT!

WELL, JUS' DON'T BE SAYIN' YE WEREN'T--

KARUNK

--WARNED--

FLAP FLAP

SO MUCH FOR THAT

GET UP, YOUR DOG! GET UP, DO YOU HEAR ME?!

GET UP AND START ALL OVER!

I'LL HAVE THESE MEWS BUILT TO MY SPECIFI-

DO THEY ALWAYS SPEAK WITH THEIR FEET IN CANTRIUM, BARON?

HNH? PUBLIUS!

TEND TO YOUR OWN BUSINESS, COUNCILOR

I RENDER MY ACCOUNTS TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, KING CONAN, HIMSELF--

—NOT TO ANY BARREL-BELLIED WHITEBEARDS!

I'LL BE BACK AT DUSK AND THESE MEWS HAD BETTER BE FINISHED BY THEN!

GRAARF! THE MAN'S NO ARCHITECT, COUNCILOR PUBLIUS.

AMONG THE OTHER THINGS HE'S NOT, FELLOW.

JUST IGNORE THE PLANS HE GAVE YOU, AND COMPLETE THE REBUILDING AS IT *SHOULD* BE DONE.

YOU HAVE MY PERMISSION.

BY MY MORTAL EYES, BE CERTAIN WHEN THE MEWS TURN OUT ALL RIGHT, MALORIC WILL BE FIRST TO CLAIM THE CREDIT.

I'LL GO TELL THE KING THE PROJECT'S NEAR COMPLETION, THEN I'LL--

WHO'S THAT IN THE SHADOWS?

SOME IDLER, NO DOUBT, NEGLIGENT IN HIS COURT DUTIES

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE LOAFING DOG!

YOU'RE COMING WITH ME TO THE DUNGEONS!

UNHAND ME YOU SON OF A BRYTHU-NIAN BAR-TROLLOP!

BEFORE I UNMAN YOU!

PRINCE TAURUS!

A THOUSAND PARDONS, MOST REVEREND SCION OF ROYALTY AND HEIR TO THE REALM.

THUK

AWAY FROM ME YOU IDIOT!

WHY, YES, YES CERTAINLY! AT ONCE, YOUR PRINCENESS!

MALORIC MALORIC, EVER THE SYCOPHANT, EVER THE FOOL

"... AH BUT ONCE AGAIN HERE'S THE [illegible] IN THE ANNALS OF TIME"

THE QUEEN HAS SPOKEN TO ME OF YOU, UH...

LYSANDER.

AYE, LYSANDER

SPOKEN AND SPOKEN

WHY IS IT SHE TAKES SO GREAT AN INTEREST IN YOU, SOLDIER?

HA! ANSWER ME THAT!

I SUPPOSE 'TIS BECAUSE I WAS LAST MAN TO SEE YOUR NOBLE SON, PRINCE CONN, ALIVE BEFORE HE FELL TO ASSASSINS' BLADES IN GUNDERLAND.

I'LL BUY THAT FOR TRUTH, MAN.

YOU'RE A BRAVE ONE, AT LEAST, NOT TO FLINCH AT *MY* BLADE

WELL I'VE NO RANK TO FILL IN THE BLACK DRAGONS FOR THE NONCE...

...BUT A SOLDIER OF YOUR STEEL WILL SERVE THE QUEEN WELL AS PERSONAL BODYGUARD.

THERE'S YOUR NEW APPOINTMENT

THOUGH, 'TIS LESS THAN I HAD HOPED FOR, SIRE, ACCEPT MY HUMBLE THANKS

KING CONAN!

MY MOST GLORIOUS MONARCH AND SHINING CROWN OF AQUILONIA --

MALCRE!

QUICK, SOLDIER LET'S BE OFF BEFORE MY GIBBERING COUNCILOR CHEWS THE BARS FROM MY HEAD WITH HIS COURTLY NONSENSE!

IMPERIAL HIGHNESS AND DIADEM OF THE REALM...

BLAST! HE'S SEEN ME!

..MAJESTIC SOVEREIGN...

THIS WAY, SOLDIER!

NOW ROUND ABOUT--

--ACROSS HERE--

FASTER!

I THINK WE'VE LOST HIM, SIRE

GOOD.

... MOST ROYAL LIEGE AND ANNOINTED OF MITRA ...

MY PARDON I SPOKE TOO SOON.

CROM!

HAHAHAHA

WELL, WHAT IS IT, MALORIC?

MOST--HUFF--MASTERFUL--PUFF--POWERFUL--HMM--SUPREME LORD--

OUT WITH IT, BLAST YOUR HIDE!

THE--HUFF--MEWS FOR THE FALCONS WILL--PUFF--BE COMPLETED BY DUSK YOUR HIGHNESS.

I'VE TOLD YOU TEN THOUSAND TIMES TO MAKE SUCH REPORTS TO THE QUEEN!

OH. THEN SO I SHALL, BY YOUR LEAVE, MY KING

ONLY ONE MORE THING OF A PERSONAL NATURE IF I MAY, SIRE?

YES--?

YOUR PROMISE TO SPEAK TO CAPTAIN TARQUIN ABOUT ADMITTING MY SON, PEPIN NTO HIS SQUADRON OF BLACK DRAGONS

HAVE YOU--?

PEPIN ! A MERE BOY?

YES, COUNCILOR, ALL'S DONE AS YOUR KING GAVE WORD.

NOW BEGINS

AND GREAT ROMANCE

A GOOD ROMANCE TOO, DOG

BUT THIS YOUNGER SON OF YOURS, THIS TAURUS INTERESTS ME

HE SEEMS TO POSSESS A DEVIL'S STREAK.

"WHERE IS *HE* NOW IN THE MISTS OF TIME?"

OH, BROTHER, BROTHER, BROTHER! HOW COULD I BE SO CARELESS?

WHERE'S THAT LETTER LEONIDAS SENT ME SECRETLY?

IF FATHER DISCOVERS MY TRUE LOVE IS LEONIDAS...

AND *NOT* THAT PEPIN FACET POP PEPIN WHO WOULD HAVE ME WI--

--THEN ALL'S LOST

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR, DEAR SISTER RADEGUND?

OH! TAURUS!

OH UH I IM I CAN'T SEEM TO FIND MY LUTE--

YOUR *LUTE?*

WHY, PRINCESS, OPEN YOUR EYES. IT'S RIGHT HERE ON YOUR BED.

OH IT IS, ISN'T IT? I'M SO BLIND.

I'LL...I'LL JUST TUNE IT--

YES, DO THAT

AND THEN YOU CAN WRITE BALLADS OF LOVE--

--TO YOUR SWEETHEART, *LEONIDAS!*

LEONIDAS?! HOW DO YOU--?

YOU'RE VERY CARELESS WITH YOUR PERSONAL BELONGINGS, HA!

OH! MY LETTER!

GIVE IT BACK TO ME, YOU IMP!

♪ RADEGUND AND LEONIDAS SITTING IN A TREE .. ♪

A DEVIL'S STREAK!

AYE, MAYHAP HE WILL SERVE ME IN DUE TIME.

BUT I FORGET MY FIRST AND PRESENT GOAL...

...TO FIND THE MAGE WHO HAS OUTWITTED ME THIS DAY.

WHAT IS THIS--?!

THE MISTS OF TIME CLOUD OVER, BUT NOT AT *MY* BIDDING--

DAMNATION! SOMEONE'S BLOCKING MY SPELL!

HOW?! ONLY ONE WHO HOLDS MY--

BY SET!

BEGONE THEN, YE MISTS, FOR I MUST NOW FIND THIS CUNNING SORCERER, WHOEVER HE BE.

THEN AFTERWARDS, I'LL RETURN TO THE BUSINESS OF CONAN'S DEATH.

THENSHORES OF KHEM!...

WITCHCRAFT!

AYE! WITCHCRAFT AND BLACK MAGIC SLEW NHATON AND AMUTEP.

BUT WHO WOULD WANT TO KILL A POOR FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE?

A PENNILESS, CHILDLESS COUPLE?

'TIS A BLESSING THEY HAD NO CHILDREN BETWEEN THEM.

IMAGINE A CHILD TO SUFFER SUCH A TRAGEDY.

WHILE OUTSIDE...

WHAT IS THIS?! THE MISTS OF TIME CLOUD OVER...

...BUT NOT AT MY BIDDING!

DAMNATION!! SOMEONE'S BLOCKING MY SPELL!

HOW?

ONLY ONE WHO HOLDS MY...

Alan Zelenetz
SCRIPT

Marc Silvestri
BREAKDOWNS

Geof Isherwood
FINISHES

Richard Parker
LETTERER

George Roussos
COLORIST

Pat Redding
EDITOR

Larry Hama
SENIOR EDITOR

Jim Shooter
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

KING CONAN

℅ MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

JIM OWSLEY
EDITOR

We like to get your letters. But if you don't want your full address published, please tell us.

Jim and Larry:

Er ... I'm sure Leonidas has given Radegund something to um . . . remember him by. I'll be interested to see how the Conn serial will be resolved in twelve pages. I realize your good intentions in trying to spotlight many of the supporting characters in CONAN THE KING, yet I feel you are focusing on too many characters in too short a time.

Keith Drawbaugh
4003 Old Orchard Road
York, PA 17402

Artists of the Nemedian Way:

So far, you're doing a great job. I love all your work with CONAN THE KING and the other Conan mags. Conan is, by far, my favorite Marvel character.

However, I am confused. I was reading CONAN THE KING #25 when I noticed it. Conan's personal warriors, the Black Dragons, wear a lion emblem on their chest and have horns on their helmets. Neither of those things have anything to do with their "Dragon" name. Also, I wondered if the guards at the end of King Conan's royal procession ever had to cut off the head of anyone who wasn't showing proper respect to the king as he passed. Finally, CONAN: SON OF THE BARBARIAN KING was especially good. What's with the asterisk after mutton, though? Any Nemedian fool should know what that is!

Thanks once again for a great Marvel character and I hope you can enlighten me on these questions.

Steve Mayhew
77 State Street
Middleport, N.Y. 14105

"Black Dragons" is merely a ceremonial title bestowed on the Aquilonian king's personal guard, Steve. The title was no doubt created by Numedides, Conan's predecessor. Their insignia is the official Aquilonian lion seal, and their helmets were the standard (and practical) battle gear of that era.

Dear Jim,

The story, "Daggers" in issue #25 was a very good yet sad tale. Right from page one the artwork was quite richly detailed and a delight to consume with the eye. Princess Radegund is more beautiful and desirable as ever. No doubt she and Leonidas belong together. I felt the pang of hurt from Queen Zenobia as she waited alone for Conan — he'd best wake up or he may lose her, especially with Lysander's ambition. Pepin is a toad! He is to wed beautiful Radegund? That jerk? I loved it when Conan cracked up at the dripping-wet Pepin! Something's gotta be done about Taurus! I don't just mean his goat foot either. He is a little demon and I know he bodes no good for Aquilonia. Man, there is just so much that can happen in this title. I just don't know what to expect, but I'm sure Alan will surprise us.

The second feature, CONAN: SON OF THE BARBARIAN KING, was excellent. He wins a beautiful girl (just like dad), he fights a horde of red- and white-garbed samurai, then just when it seems he'll earn eternal gratitude and a new friendship, the guy he rescues commits hari kari! Sheesh! And, as if that weren't enough, we're astounded at the story's end by a Conn twin! This comic is absolutely too much!

Todd "CK" Freeman
Box 1000
T.J. Air Base, Spain
APO N.Y., 09283

Dear Conan Creators,

I am in the minority of comics readers (I am a female), but I enjoy CONAN THE KING very much. I am very much in favor of this magazine taking a different slant (concentrating on Conan's court life and warring with words instead of swords) since he has two other monthly mags in which to fight his frustrations with swords. I have just briefly read through the newest issue out on the stands (CONAN THE KING #25, "Daggers"), and I wanted to make just a few comments. First I'd like to say I really like and approve of the bent the storyline is taking; the intrigue and nefarious doings of Prince Taurus really add spice to the story. But Conan's own son doing such nasty, unprincelike things as spying on his own mother, and making plans for using that information? The boy needs a good talking-to, i.e.: corporal punishment. Next is the expected but still entertaining romance of Radegund and one of her old man's Black Dragons. But shouldn't she display more fear of being kidnapped? After all, one brother supposedly dead and then another kidnapped (in issue #24)! Well, *I'd* be nervous. The Queen's (dangerous) loneliness is a very good subplot, with several possible directions in which to take it. And, Pepin — gee, what a sad-looking guy. He looks like a poster child for "Don't Let This Happen To You". You can't be serious about marrying Radegund to him! Let her have her Black Dragon, Conan would probably approve. And lastly, please reunite the king with Prince Conn soon — don't keep dragging out this storyline, although it has been interesting. It was heartrending the way they almost made it back to each other in issue #24! Do bring them back to each other soon. As usual the art is very nice, and to end, keep the intrigues and subplots going. It's refreshing to see things end a draw, instead of being settled with a sword. That's all I wanted to say, mostly little things, but they really make a good story a little better.

Rhonda Calvert
1021 Hillcrest
Denton, TX 76201

Gee, Rhonda, we didn't realize you were in the minority of our readers; we get lots of letters from Texas. Honest.

Dear Marvel,

You have a great storyline going in CONAN THE KING, and it is improving with each issue. "Daggers" was a pleasure to read with all its plot twists and stunning artwork by Silvestri and Isherwood. Keep these two together; they are perhaps the best art team to ever draw Conan in any of his comic book incarnations. Alan Zelenetz deserve praise also for weaving such an intricate set of tales. Though it's not over yet, the current storyline beginning in #20 reads as a Conan novel that Robert E. Howard would be proud of.

Only one thing bothers me: I hope you don't plan to have Conn switch places with his "twin" from Khitai. This wouldn't be a very original idea and would spoil things, I think. As good as the series is, don't forget to wrap it up soon. Conn should return to Aquilonia, and you should eventually lead up to "Conan of the Isles" in whatever format you choose to present that adaptation (hopefully as a graphic novel on high quality paper by Marc and Geof).

Have you considered increasing the frequency of publication of CONAN THE KING, if not monthly, then perhaps every six weeks? Also, seeing as how high the quality of this book has reached, why don't you switch to the better quality paper, mando or baxter? Surely, CONAN THE KING deserves special treatment? Think about it.

Gino D'Ambrosio
4651 S. Austin
Seattle, WA 98118

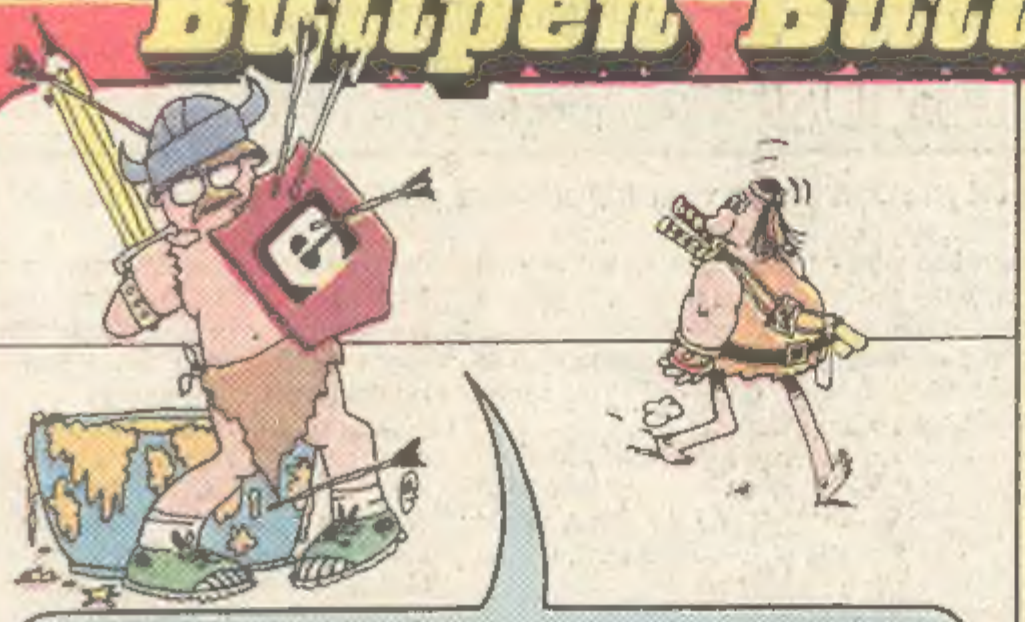
We'll make a deal with you, Gino; you increase the sales, we'll increase the publishing frequency! Until then, you'll have to satisfy your barbarian lust with the latest issues of CONAN THE BARBARIAN and THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN. Not to mention a certain flame-haired she-devil named RED SONJA, whose adventures are chronicled in her own bi-monthly mag (not to mention that the selfsame she-devil will be appearing within these very pages next issue! That's right, True Believers! *This* is the Marvel Age of unabashed free plugs)!

THE EDITOR IS DEAD

Well, not quite. Actually, I've been promoted. By the time you read this, I will be firmly ensconced within the smallest office Jim Shooter can find (yes, even smaller than Ralph Macchio's), making the world safe for SPIDER-MAN and company. Although it's very flattering for me, the new kid on the block, to be given the awesome responsibility of perpetuating a veritable legend, I must admit to releasing control of CONAN THE KING only after considerable kicking and screaming and gnashing of teeth. It just doesn't fit into my Spidey-schedule and rather than give any project less than 100%, I'd rather let go. Knowing into whose hands the book now falls helps out a lot, though. Beginning next issue, my boss — er, former boss, Larry Hama will take over the reins and I have every confidence that CONAN THE KING will continue its progress towards greatness within the Marvel Universe. As for me, I'll be stepping into a pair of extremely large shoes as I switch gears into the world of Peter Parker and friends. I'll be okay, soon as I manage to keep my teeth from chattering. It's been fun.

Jim Owsley

Bullpen Bulletins



Hi. I'm Archie Goodwin, editor of Marvel's EPIC COMICS line, appearing through the courtesy of my close personal friend (and Boss) Jim Shooter, who's always looking for an excuse to get out of doing one of these Bullpen Bulletins himself.

You may wonder why an editor in charge of such maturely-oriented, expensively-printed, creator-owned, direct sales-only titles as VOID INDIGO, TIME SPIRITS, and SISTERHOOD OF STEEL is risking his life like this defending a giant bowl of cheese dip. Well, it's just my sophisticated, symbolic way of telling you that one of the biggest defenders of cheese dip *ever* is about to get his own Epic Comic. I'm talking

SERGIO ARAGONÉS'
GROO
THE WANDERER!

If you frequent comics or specialty shops, you may have already encountered this swift-sworded, slow-witted, always hilarious barbarian. But if you've *never* seen GROO, we're about to change all that, because from now on, you'll be able to find him *everywhere!* Sergio's creation (That's right, he's the same Sergio Aragonés famous for his work in MAD and about a jillion different paperback books) is going to be the first Epic Comic available on newsstands all over just like your favorite Marvel titles! But it won't be the *last!* So you see, GROO is far more than just another great seventy-five cent comic book on sale right now . . . it's the beginning of an ENTIRE NEW ERA for Epic Comics!

Uh . . . Meantime, anybody care for some leftover cheese dip?

THE HYPE BOX

G.I. JOE YEARBOOK #1 — Now's your chance to plug into the G.I. Joe saga and learn everything about G.I. Joe! This special Yearbook contains the complete reprint of the legendary G.I. JOE #1, highlights from every other issue to bring you up to date with the current story, selected dossiers of your favorite Joes, and an article about G.I. Joe on television! Look for the incredible wrap-around cover by MICHAEL GOLDEN! This is the book you've been waiting for, so reserve your copy now!

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #100 — A special double-size anniversary issue! SEE Kingpin's ultimate revenge! SEE what finally happens between the Black Cat and Spider-Man! SEE the furious battle between Spider-Man and Spot! SEE . . . the Black Costume! Written and penciled by AL MILGROM! Inked by GEOF ISHERWOOD!

MARVEL FANFARE #19 — Featuring a *Cloak & Dagger* extravaganza! This 3-part story reveals new insights about the *true* nature of Cloak and Dagger's relationship! And each part was drawn by different artists, including TONY SALMONS, RICK LEONARDI and TERRY AUSTIN, and KERRY GAMMILL and GEORGE FREEMAN! And it was all written by BILL MANTLO! On sale *now* at your local comic shop!

SERGIO ARAGONÉS'S GROO THE WANDERER #1 — Madcap MADman SERGIO ARAGONÉS brings Groo to EPIC COMICS, and the fun is just beginning! Follow Groo as he wanders through an age of wizards and monsters, looking for an honest job as a mercenary. Unfortunately, Groo does what Groo does best, and that means everything is bound to go wrong! Join Groo, Sergio, and mendicant MARK EVANIER in some of the funniest adventures ever inspired by cheese dip! Cheese dip!? (Hey, just take our word for it — don't miss the new monthly adventures of GROO, on sale at your local comics shop and *newsstands everywhere!*)

SUPERSPECIAL #36: DUNE — Arrakis, a world of deserts and voracious sandworms, where water is the most precious commodity, would seem to be the last place anyone would want to go. Why, then, does it hold the key to the future of galactic civilization? Frank Herbert's science fiction classic has become the movie event of the decade, and this is the official movie adaptation! Written by RALPH MACCHIO! Illustrated by BILL SIENKIEWICZ!

CHECK LIST

- ☐ **THE THING #21**
- ☐ **DAREDEVIL #216**
- ☐ **NEW MUTANTS #25** — Featuring the final chapter of the *Cloak & Dagger* trilogy! You dare not miss it!
- ☐ **RED SONJA #7**
- ☐ **MARVEL SUPER HEROES SECRET WARS (Limited Series) #11** — The penultimate chapter of the war that shook the Marvel Universe!
- ☐ **CONAN THE KING #27**
- ☐ **G.I. JOE YEARBOOK #1** — Because you demanded it!! See Hype Box!
- ☐ **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #262**
- ☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA #303**
- ☐ **INDIANA JONES #27**
- ☐ **POWER PACK #6**
- ☐ **MICRONAUTS #6**
- ☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT #20**
- ☐ **TRANSFORMERS (Limited Series) #4**
- ☐ **CONAN THE DESTROYER (Limited Series) #2**
- ☐ **INCREDIBLE HULK #305**
- ☐ **AVENGERS #253**
- ☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #168**
- ☐ **MARVEL TALES #173** — Reprinting "The Thrill of the Hunt," by STAN LEE and STEVE DITKO, from *Amazing Spider-Man #34.*
- ☐ **X-MEN #191**
- ☐ **ROM #64** — P. CRAIG RUSSELL is the Guest Inker over pencils by STEVE DITKO in this thrilling issue written by BILL MANTLO!
- ☐ **POWER MAN / IRON FIST #115** — Cage and The Fist (and writer JIM OWSLEY) welcome new regular penciler MARK BRIGHT! The action is just beginning!
- ☐ **G.I. JOE #33**
- ☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #278** — Not a dream! Not a hoax! JOHN BYRNE introduces the inking wizardry of JERRY ORDWAY! It's the start of a *new* era of greatness!
- ☐ **IRON MAN #192**
- ☐ **DEFENDERS #141**
- ☐ **STAR WARS #93**
- ☐ **THOR #353**
- ☐ **KITTY PRYDE AND WOLVERINE (Limited Series) #5**
- ☐ **PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #100** — A milestone issue! See Hype Box.
- ☐ **DR. WHO #6**

MARVEL MAGAZINES

- ☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #109**
- ☐ **MARVEL FANFARE #19** — A *Cloak & Dagger* Special! See Hype Box.
- ☐ **MARVEL AGE #24**

EPIC COMICS

- ☐ **CRASH RYAN (Limited Series) #4**
- ☐ **SERGIO ARAGONÉS' GROO THE WANDERER #1** — Featuring the hilarious misadventures of SERGIO ARAGONÉS' wandering barbarian! See Hype Box!
- ☐ **THE SWORDS OF SWASHBUCKLERS #1** — Those space-faring pirates find excitement and adventure in this new series by BILL MANTLO and BUTCH GUICE! Continued from the Graphic Novel!
- ☐ **COYOTE #10**
- ☐ **EPIC ILLUSTRATED #28**

ASSORTED GOODIES

- ☐ **SUPERSPECIAL #36: DUNE** — Danger and intrigue are a way of life on the desert world! The complete Marvel adaptation of the hit movie! See Hype Box!
- ☐ **SUPERSPECIAL #37: 2010** — The space odyssey continues in this Marvel adaptation of the most eagerly awaited movie sequel of all! Written by J.M. DEMATTEIS. Pencils by LARRY HAMA and JOE BARNEY. Finishes by TOM PALMER.